

PR4222

C47

1905



THE LIBRARY
OF
THE UNIVERSITY
OF CALIFORNIA
RIVERSIDE

Ex Libris

C. K. OGDEN

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2008 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

HEART AND LIFE BOOKLETS. No. 9.

CHRISTMAS EVE

HEART AND LIFE BOOKLETS.

Fcap. 8vo. Artistic Wrappers. 6d. net each.

1. THE LONELINESS OF CHRIST.

By F. W. ROBERTSON (of Brighton).

2. THE PURPOSE AND USE OF COMFORT.

By the Right Rev. Bishop PHILLIPS BROOKS, D.D.

3. AN EASTER SERMON.

By the Right Rev. Bishop PHILLIPS BROOKS, D.D.

4. SELECTIONS FROM FABER'S HYMNS.

5. LIFE WITH GOD.

By the Right Rev. Bishop PHILLIPS BROOKS, D.D.

6. HUXLEY AND PHILLIPS BROOKS.

By W. NEWTON CLARKE, D.D.

7. EASTER DAY.

By ROBERT BROWNING.

8. RELIGION IN COMMON LIFE.

By Principal JOHN CAIRD, D.D., LL.D.

9. CHRISTMAS EVE.

By ROBERT BROWNING.

To be followed by others.

LONDON : H. R. ALLENSON, IVY LANE, E.C.

HEART AND LIFE BOOKLETS. No. 9.

CHRISTMAS EVE

ROBERT BROWNING



LONDON: H. R. ALLENSON

PK4222

C47

1905

CHRISTMAS EVE

I.

Out of the little chapel I burst
Into the fresh night air again.
I had waited a good five minutes first
In the doorway, to escape the rain
That drove in gusts down the common's
centre,

At the edge of which the chapel stands,
Before I plucked up heart to enter :
Heaven knows how many sorts of hands
Reached past me, groping for the latch
Of the inner door that hung on catch,
More obstinate the more they fumbled,
Till, giving way at last with a scold
Of the crazy hinge, in squeezed or tumbled
led

One sheep more to the rest in fold,
And left me irresolute, standing sentry
In the sheepfold's lath-and-plaster entry,
Four feet long by two feet wide,
Partitioned off from the vast inside—

I blocked up half of it at least.
No remedy ; the rain kept driving :
They eyed me much as some wild beast,
That congregation, still arriving,
Some of them by the mainroad, white
A long way past me into the night,
Skirting the common, then diverging ;
Not a few suddenly emerging
From the common's self thro' the paling-
gaps,—
—They house in the gravel-pits perhaps,
Where the road stops short with its safe-
guard border
Of lamps, as tired of such disorder ;—
But the most turned in yet more abruptly
From a certain squalid knot of alleys,
Where the town's bad blood once slept
corruptly,
Which now the little chapel rallies
And leads into day again,—its priestliness
Lending itself to hide their beastliness
So cleverly (thanks in part to the mason),
And putting so cheery a whitewashed face
on
Those neophytes too much in lack of it,
That, where you cross the common as I
did,
And meet the party thus presided,
“ Mount Zion,” with Love-lane at the back
of it,

They front you as little disconcerted,
As, bound for the hills, her fate averted
And her wicked people made to mind him,
Lot might have marched with Gomorrah
behind him.

II.

Well, from the road, the lanes or the
common,
In came the flock: the fat weary woman,
Panting and bewildered, down-clapping
Her umbrella with a mighty report,
Grounded it by me, wry and flapping,
A wreck of whalebones; then, with a snort,
Like a startled horse, at the interloper
Who humbly knew himself improper,
But could not shrink up small enough,
Round to the door, and in,—the gruff
Hinge's invariable scold
Making your very blood run cold.
Prompt in the wake of her, up-pattered
On broken clogs, the many-tattered
Little old-faced, peaking sister-turned-
mother
Of the sickly babe she tried to smother
Somehow up, with its spotted face,
From the cold, on her breast, the one
warm place;
She too must stop, wring the poor suds dry

Of a dragged shawl, and add thereby
Her tribute to the door-mat, sopping
Already from my own clothes' dropping,
Which yet she seemed to grudge I should
stand on ;

Then stooping down to take off her pat-
tens,

She bore them defiantly, in each hand one,
Planted together before her breast
And its babe, as good as a lance in rest.

Close on her heels, the dingy satins
Of a female something, past me flitted,
With lips as much too white, as a streak
Lay far too red on each hollow cheek ;
And it seemed the very door-hinge pitied
All that was left of a woman once,

Holding at least its tongue for the nonce.

Then a tall yellow man, like the Penitent
Thief,

With his jaw bound up in a handkerchief,
And eyelids screwed together tight,
Led himself in by some inner light.

And, except from him, from each that
entered,

I had the same interrogation—

“ What, you, the alien, you have ventured

“ To take with us, elect, your station ?

“ A carer for none of it, a Gallio ? ”—

Thus, plain as print, I read the glance

At a common prey, in each countenance,

As of huntsman giving his hounds the
tallyho :
And, when the door's cry drowned their
wonder,
The draught, it always sent in shutting,
Made the flame of the single tallow candle
In the cracked square lanthorn I stood
under,
Shoot its blue lip at me, rebutting,
As it were, the luckless cause of scandal :
I verily thought the zealous light
(In the chapel's secret, too !) for spite,
Would shudder itself clean off the wick,
With the airs of a St. John's Candlestick.
There was no standing it much longer.
" Good folks," said I, as resolve grew
stronger,
" This way you perform the Grand-In-
quisitor,
" When the weather sends you a chance
visitor ?
" You are the men, and wisdom shall die
with you,
" And none of the old Seven Churches
vie with you !
" But still, despite the pretty perfection
" To which you carry your trick of exclu-
siveness,
" And, taking God's word under wise pro-
tection,

“ Correct its tendency to diffusiveness,
“ Bidding one reach it over hot plough-
 shares,—
“ Still, as I say, though you’ve found
 salvation,
“ If I should choose to cry—as now—
 ‘ Shares ! ’—

“ See if the best of you bars me my ration !
“ Because I prefer for my expounder
“ Of the laws of the feast, the feast’s own
 Founder :
“ Mine’s the same right with your poorest
 and sickliest,
“ Supposing I don the marriage-vestiment;
“ So, shut your mouth, and open your
 Testament,
“ And carve me my portion at your quick-
 liest ! ”

Accordingly, as a shoemaker’s lad
With wizened face in want of soap,
And wet apron wound round his waist
 like a rope,
After stopping outside, for his cough was
 bad,
To get the fit over, poor gentle creature,
And so avoid disturbing the preacher,
Passed in, I sent my elbows spikewise
At the shutting door, and entered like-
 wise,—
Received the hinge’s accustomed greeting,

Crossed the threshold's magic pentacle,
And found myself in full conventicle,
—To wit, in Zion Chapel Meeting,
On the Christmas-Eve of 'Forty-nine,
Which, calling its flock to their special
 clover,
Found them assembled and one sheep
 over,
Whose lot, as the weather pleased, was
 mine.

III.

I very soon had enough of it.
The hot smell and the human noises,
And my neighbour's coat, the greasy cuff
 of it,
Were a pebble-stone that a child's hand
 poises,
Compared with the pig-of-lead-like pres-
 sure
Of the preaching-man's immense stupidity,
As he poured his doctrine forth, full mea-
 sure,
To meet his audience's avidity.
You needed not the wit of a Sybil
To guess the cause of it all, in a twink-
 ling—
No sooner had our friend an inkling
Of treasure hid in the Holy Bible,

(Whenever it was the thought first struck
him

How Death, at unawares, might duck him
Deeper than the grave, and quench

The gin-shop's light in Hell's grim drench)

Than he handled it so, in fine irreverence,
As to hug the Book of books to pieces :

And, a patchwork of chapters and texts in
severance,

Not improved by the private dog's-ears
and creases,

Having clothed his own soul with, he'd
fain see equipt yours,—

So tossed you again your Holy Scriptures.

And you picked them up, in a sense, no
doubt :

Nay, had but a single face of my neighbours
Appeared to suspect that the preacher's
labours

Were help which the world could be saved
without,

'Tis odds but I had borne in quiet

A qualm or two at my spiritual diet ;

Or, who can tell ? had even mustered

Somewhat to urge in behalf of the sermon :

But the flock sate on, divinely flustered,

Sniffing, methought, its dew of Hermon

With such content in every snuffle,

As the devil inside us loves to ruffle.

My old fat woman purred with pleasure,

And thumb round thumb went twirling
faster,
While she, to his periods keeping measure,
Maternally devoured the pastor.
The man with the handkerchief, untied it,
Showed us a horrible wen inside it,
Gave his eyelids yet another screwing,
And rocked himself as the woman was
doing.
The shoemaker's lad, discreetly choking,
Kept down his cough. 'Twas too provok-
ing !
My gorge rose at the nonsense and stuff
of it,
And saying, like Eve when she plucked
the apple,
"I wanted a taste, and now there's enough
of it,"
I flung out of the little chapel.

IV.

There was a lull in the rain, a lull
In the wind too ; the moon was risen,
And would have shone out pure and full,
But for the ramparted cloud-prison,
Block on block built up in the west,
For what purpose the wind knows best,
Who changes his mind continually.
And the empty other half of the sky

Seemed in its silence as if it knew
What, any moment, might look through
A chance-gap in that fortress massy :—
Through its fissures you got hints
Of the flying moon, by the shifting tints,
Now, a dull lion-colour, now, brassy
Burning to yellow, and whitest yellow,
Like furnace-smoke just ere the flames
 below,
All a-simmer with intense strain
To let her through,—then blank again,
At the hope of her appearance failing.
Just by the chapel a break in the railing
Shows a narrow path directly across ;
'Tis ever dry walking there, on the moss—
Besides, you go gently all the way uphill :
I stooped under and soon felt better :
My head grew light, my limbs more supple,
As I walked on, glad to have slipt the fetter ;
My mind was full of the scene I had left,
That placid flock, that pastor vociferant,
—How this outside was pure and different !
The sermon now—what a mingled weft
Of good and ill ! were either less,
Its fellow had coloured the whole distinctly ;
But alas for the excellent earnestness,
And the truths, quite true if stated suc-
 cinctly,
But as surely false, in their quaint pre-
 sentment,

However to pastor and flock's contentment !

Say rather, such truths looked false to your eyes,

With his provings and parallels twisted and twined,

Till how could you know them, grown double their size,

In the natural fog of the good man's mind ?

Like yonder spots of our roadside lamps,

Haloed about with the common's damp.

Truth remains true, the fault's in the prover ;

The zeal was good and the aspiration ;

And yet, and yet, yet, fifty times over,

Pharaoh received no demonstration

By his Baker's dream of Baskets Three,

Of the doctrine of the Trinity,—

Although, as our preacher thus embellished it,

Apparently his hearers relished it

With so unfeigned a gust—who knows if

They did not prefer our friend to Joseph ?

But so it is everywhere, one way with all of them !

These people really felt, no doubt,

A something, the motion they style the Call of them ;

And this is their method of bringing about,

By a mechanism of words and tones,

(So many texts in so many groans)
A sort of reviving or reproducing,
More or less perfectly (who can tell?—),
Of the mood itself, that strengthens by
 using ;
And how it happens, I understand well.
A tune was born in my head last week,
Out of the thump-thump and shriek-shriek
Of the train, as I came by it, up from
 Manchester ;
And when, next week, I take it back again,
My head will sing to the engine's clack
 again,
While it only makes my neighbour's
 haunches stir,
—Finding no dormant musical sprout
In him, as in me, to be jolted out.
'Tis the taught already that profit by
 teaching ;
He gets no more from the railway's
 preaching,
Than, from this preacher who does the
 rail's office, I,
Whom therefore the flock casts a jealous
 eye on.
Still, why paint over their door " Mount
 Zion,"
To which all flesh shall come, saith the
 prophecy ?

V.

But wherefore be harsh on a single case ?
After how many modes, this Christmas-
Eve,

Does this selfsame weary thing take place?
The same endeavour to make you believe,
And much with the same effect, no more :
Each method abundantly convincing,
As I say, to those convinced before,
But scarce to be swallowed without win-
cing,

By the not-as-yet-convinced. For me,
I have my own church equally.

And in *this* church my faith sprang first !
(I said, as I reached the rising ground,
And the wind began again, with a burst
Of rain in my face, and a glad rebound
From the heart beneath, as if, God speed-
ing me,

I entered His church-door, Nature leading
me)

—In youth I looked to these very skies,
And probing their immensities,
I found God there, His visible power ;
Yet felt in my heart, amid all its sense
Of that power, an equal evidence
That His love, there too, was the nobler
dower.

For the loving worm within its clod,

Were diviner than a loveless god
Amid his worlds, I will dare to say.
You know what I mean : God's all, man's
nought :

But also, God, whose pleasure brought
Man into being, stands away
As it were, an handbreadth off, to give
Room for the newly-made to live,
And look at Him from a place apart,
And use His gifts of brain and heart,
Given, indeed, but to keep for ever.
Who speaks of man, then, must not sever
Man's very element from man,
Saying, " But all is God's "—whose plan
Was to create man and then leave him
Able, His own word saith, to grieve Him,
But able to glorify Him too,
As a mere machine could never do,
That prayed or praised, all unaware
Of its fitness for aught but praise and
prayer,
Made perfect as a thing of course.
Man, therefore, stands on his own stock
Of love and power as a pin-point rock,
And, looking to God who ordained divorce
Of the rock from His boundless continent,
Sees in His Power made evident,
Only excess by a million fold
O'er the power God gave man in the
mould.

For, see : Man's hand, first formed to
carry

A few pounds' weight, when taught to
marry

Its strength with an engine's, lifts a
mountain,

—Advancing in power by one degree :

And why count steps through eternity ?

But Love is the ever springing fountain :

Man may enlarge or narrow his bed

For the water's play, but the water head—

How can he multiply or reduce it ?

As easy create it, as cause it to cease :

He may profit by it, or abuse it ;

But 'tis not a thing to bear increase

As power will : he loves less or more

In the heart of man, he keeps it shut

Or opes it wide as he pleases, but

Love's sum remains what it was before.

So, gazing up, in my youth, at love

As seen through power, ever above

All modes which makes it manifest,

My soul brought all to a single test—

That He, the Eternal First and Last,

Who, in His power, had so surpassed

All man conceives of what is might,—

Whose wisdom, too, showed infinite,

—Would prove as infinitely good ;

Would never, my soul understood,

With power to work all love desires,

Bestow e'en less than man requires :
That He who endlessly was teaching,
Above my spirit's utmost reaching,
What love can do in the leaf or stone,
(So that to master this alone,
This done in the stone or leaf for me,
I must go on learning endlessly)
Would never need that I, in turn,
Should point him out a defect unheeded,
And show that God had yet to learn
What the meanest human creature need-
ed,—
—Not life, to wit, for a few short years,
Tracking His way through doubts and
fears,
While the stupid earth on which I stay
Suffers no change, but passive adds
Its myriad years to myriads,
Though I, He gave it to, decay,
Seeing death come and choose about me,
And my dearest ones depart without me.
No ! love which, on earth, amid all the
shows of it,
Has ever been seen the sole good of life
in it,
The love, ever growing there, spite of the
strife in it,
Shall arise, made perfect, from death's
repose of it !
And I shall behold Thee, face to face,

O God, and in Thy light retrace
How in all I loved here, still wast Thou !
Whom pressing to, then, as I fain would
 now,
I shall find as able to satiate
The love, Thy gift, as my spirit's wonder
Thou art able to quicken and sublimiate,
With this sky of Thine, that I now walk
 under,
And glory in Thee as thus I gaze,
—Thus, thus ! oh, let men keep their ways
Of seeking Thee in a narrow shrine—
Be this my way ! And this *is* mine !

VI.

For lo, what think you ? suddenly
The rain and the wind ceased, and the
 sky
Received at once the full fruition
Of the moon's consummate apparition.
The black cloud-barricade was riven,
Ruined beneath her feet, and driven
Deep in the west ; while, bare and breath-
 less,
North and south and east lay ready
For a glorious Thing, that, dauntless,
 deathless,
Sprang across them, and stood steady.
'Twas a moon-rainbow, vast and perfect,

From heaven to heaven extending, perfect
As the mother-moon's self, full in face.
It rose, distinctly at the base
With its seven proper colours chorded,
Which still, in the rising, were compressed,
Until at last they cöalesced,
And supreme the spectral creature lorded
In a triumph of whitest white,—
Above which intervened the night.
But above night too, like the next,
The second of a wondrous sequence,
Reaching in rare and rarer frequency,
Till the heaven of heavens be circumflect,
Another rainbow rose, a mightier,
Fainter, flushier, and flightier,—
Rapture dying along its verge !
Oh, whose foot shall I see emerge,
WHOSE, from the straining topmost dark,
On to the keystone of that arc ?

VII.

This sight was shown me, there and
then,—
Me, one out of a world of men,
Singled forth as the chance might hap
To another, if in a thunderclap
Where I heard noise, and you saw flame,
Some one man knew God called his name.
For me, I think I said, " Appear ;
" Good were it to be ever here.

“ If Thou wilt, let me build to Thee
“ Service-tabernacles Three,
“ Where, for ever in Thy presence,
“ In extatic acquiescence,
“ Far alike from thriftless learning
“ And ignorance’s undiscerning,
“ I may worship and remain ! ”

Thus, at the show above me, gazing
With upturned eyes, I felt my brain
Glutted with the glory, blazing
Throughout its whole mass, over and
under,

Until at length it burst asunder,
And out of it boldly there streamed
The too-much glory, as it seemed,
Passing from out me to the ground,
Then palely serpentining round
Into the dark with mazy error.

VIII.

All at once I looked up with terror,
He was there.
He Himself with His human air.
On the narrow pathway, just before :
I saw the back of Him, no more—
He had left the chapel, then, as I.
I forgot all about the sky.
No face: only the sight
Of a sweepy Garment, vast and white,
With a hem that I could recognise.

I felt terror, no surprise :
My mind filled with the cataract,
At one bound, of the mighty fact.
I remembered, He did say
Doubtless, that, to this world's end,
Where two or three should meet and pray,
He would be in the midst, their Friend :
Certainly He was there with them.
And my pulses leaped for joy
Of the golden thought without alloy,
That I saw His very Vesture's hem.
Then rushed the blood back, cold and clear
With a fresh enhancing shiver of fear,
And I hastened, cried out while I pressed
To the salvation of the Vest,
“ But not so, Lord ! It cannot be
“ That Thou, indeed, art leaving me—
“ Me, that have despised Thy friends.
“ Did my heart make no amends ?
“ Thou art the Love of God—above
“ His Power, didst hear me place His
 Love,
“ And that was leaving the world for Thee
“ Therefore Thou must not turn from me
“ As if I had chosen the other part.
“ Folly and pride o'ercame my heart.
“ Our best is bad, nor bears Thy test ;
“ Still it should be our very best.
“ I thought it best that Thou, the Spirit,
“ Be worshipped in spirit and in truth,

“And in beauty, as even we require it—
“Not in the forms burlesque, uncouth,
“I left but now, as scarcely fitted
“For Thee : I knew not what I pitied :
“But all I felt there, right or wrong,
“What is it to Thee, who curest sinning?
“Am I not weak as Thou art strong?
“I have looked to Thee from the beginning,
“Straight up to Thee through all the world
“Which, like an idle scroll, lay furled,
“To nothingness on either side :
“And since the time Thou wast desried,
“Spite of the weak heart, so have I
“Lived ever, and so fain would die,
“Living and dying, Thee before !
“But if Thou leavest me—”

IX.

Less or more,
I suppose that I spoke thus.
When,—have mercy, Lord, on us !
The whole Face turned upon me full.
And I spread myself beneath it,
As when the bleacher spreads, to see the it
In the cleansing sun, his wool,—
Steeps in the flood of noontide whiteness
Some defiled, discoloured web—
So lay I, saturate with brightness.
And when the flood appeared to ebb,
Lo, I was walking, light and swift,

With my senses settling fast and steadying,
But my body caught up in the whirl and
drift

Of the Vesture's amplitude, still eddying
On, just before me, still to be followed,
As it carried me after with its motion :
What shall I say?—as a path were hollowed
And a man went weltering through the
ocean,

Sucked along in the flying wake
Of the luminous water-snake.
Darkness and cold were cloven, as through
I passed, upborne yet walking too.

And I turned to myself at intervals,—

“ So He said, and so it befalls.

“ God who registers the cup

“ Of mere cold water, for His sake

“ To a disciple rendered up,

“ Disdains not His own thirst to slake

“ At the poorest love was ever offered :

“ And because it was my heart I proffered,

“ With true love trembling at the brim,

“ He suffers me to follow Him

“ For ever, my own way,—dispensed

“ From seeking to be influenced

“ By all the less immediate ways

“ That earth, in worships manifold,

“ Adopts to reach, by prayer and praise,

“ The Garment's hem, which, lo, I hold!”

X.

And so we crossed the world and stopped.
For where am I, in city or plain,
Since I am 'ware of the world again ?
And what is this that rises propped
With pillars of prodigious girth ?
Is it really on the earth,
This miraculous Dome of God ?
Has the angel's measuring-rod
Which numbered cubits, gem from gem,
'Twixt the gates of the New Jerusalem,
Meted it out,—and what he meted,
Have the sons of men completed ?
—Binding, ever as he bade,
Columns in this colonnade
With arms wide open to embrace
The entry of the human race
To the breast of . . . what is it, yon
 building,
Ablaze in front, all paint and gilding,
With marble for brick, and stones of price
For garniture of the edifice ?
Now I see : it is no dream :
It stands there and does not seem ;
For ever, in pictures, thus it looks,
And thus I have read of it in books,
Often in England, leagues away,
And wondered how those fountains play,
Growing up eternally

Each to a musical water-tree,
Whose blossoms drop, a glittering boon,
Before my eyes, in the light of the moon,
To the granite lavers underneath.

Liar and dreamer in your teeth !

I, the sinner that speak to you.

Was in Rome this night, and stood, and
knew

Both this and more ! For see, for see,

The dark is rent, mine eye is free

To pierce the crust of the outer wall,

And I view inside, and all there, all,

As the swarming hollow of a hive,

The whole Basilica alive !

Men in the chancel, body, and nave,

Men on the pillars' architrave,

Men on the statues, men on the tombs

With popes and kings in their porphyry
wombs,

All famishing in expectation

Of the main-altar's consummation.

For see, for see, the rapturous moment

Approaches, and earth's best endowment

Blends with heaven's : the taper-fires

Pant up, the winding brazen spires

Heave loftier yet the baldachin ;

The incense-gaspings, long kept in,

Suspire in clouds ; the organ blatant

Holds his breath and grovels latent,

As if God's hushing finger grazed him,

(Like Behemoth when He praised him)
At the silver bell's shrill tinkling,
Quick cold drops of terror sprinkling
On the sudden pavement strewn
With faces of the multitude.
Earth breaks up, time drops away,
In flows heaven, with its new day
Of endless life, when He who trod,
Very Man and very God,
This earth in weakness, shame and pain,
Dying the death whose signs remain
Up yonder on the accursed tree,—
Shall come again, no more to be
Of captivity the thrall,
But the one God, all in all,
King of kings, and Lord of lords,
As His servant John received the words,
“ I died, and live for evermore !”

XI.

Yet I was left outside the door.
Why sate I there on the threshold-stone,
Left till He returns, alone
Save for the Garment's extreme fold
Abandoned still to bless my hold?—
My reason, to my doubt, replied,
As if a book were opened wide,
And at a certain page I traced
Every record undefaced,
Added by successive years,—

The harvestings of truth's stray ears
Singly gleaned, and in one sheaf
Bound together for belief.
Yes, I said—that He will go
And sit with these in turn, I know.
Their faith's heart beats, though her head
 swims
Too giddily to guide her limbs,
Disabled by their palsy-stroke
From propping me. Though Rome's
 gross yoke
Drops off, no more to be endured,
Her teaching is not so obscured
By errors and perversities,
That no truth shines athwart the lies :
And He, whose eye detects a spark
Even where, to man's, the whole seems
 dark,
May well see flame where each beholder
Acknowledges the embers smoulder.
But I, a mere man, fear to quit
The clue God gave me as most fit
To guide my footsteps through life's maze,
Because Himself discerns all ways
Open to reach Him : I, a man
He gave to mark where faith began
To swerve aside, till from its summit
Judgment drops her damning plummet,
Pronouncing such a fatal space
Departed from the Founder's base :

He will not bid me enter too,
But rather sit, as now I do,
Awaiting His return outside.
—'Twas thus my reason straight replied,
And joyously I turned, and pressed
The Garment's skirt upon my breast,
Until, afresh its light suffusing me,
My heart cried,—what has been abusing
me

That I should wait here lonely and coldly,
Instead of rising, entering boldly,
Baring truth's face, and letting drift
Her veils of lies as they choose to shift?
Do these men praise Him? I will raise
My voice up to their point of praise!
I see the error; but above
The scope of error, see the love.—
Oh, love of those first Christian days!
—Fanned so soon into a blaze,
From the spark preserved by the trampled
sect,

That the antique sovereign Intellect
Which then sate ruling in the world,
Like a change in dreams, was hurled
From the throne he reigned upon:
—You looked up, and he was gone!
Gone, his glory of the pen!
—Love, with Greece and Rome in ken,
Bade her scribes abhor the trick
Of poetry and rhetoric,

And exult, with hearts set free,
In blessed imbecility
Scrawled, perchance, on some torn sheet,
Leaving Livy incomplete.
Gone, his pride of sculptor, painter !
—Love, while able to acquaint her
With the thousand statues yet
Fresh from chisel, pictures wet
From brush, she saw on every side,
Chose rather with an infant's pride
To frame those portents which impart
Such unction to true Christian Art.
Gone, Music too ! The air was stirred
By happy wings : Terpander's bird
(That, when the cold came, fled away)
Would tarry not the wintry day,—
As more-enduring sculpture must,
Till a filthy saint rebuked the gust
With which he chanced to get a sight
Of some dear naked Aphrodite
He glanced a thought above the toes of,
By breaking zealously her nose off.
Love, surely, from that music's lingering,
Might have filched her organ-fingering,
Nor chose rather to set prayings
To hog-grunts, praises to horse-neighings.
Love was the startling thing, the new ;
Love was the all-sufficient too ;
And seeing that, you see the rest,
As a babe can find its mother's breast

As well in darkness as in light,
Love shut our eyes, and all seemed right.
True, the world's eyes are open now :
—Less need for me to disallow
Some few that keep Love's zone un-
buckled,
Peevish as ever to be suckled,
Lulled by the same old baby-prattle
With intermixture of the rattle,
When she would have them creep, stand
steady
Upon their feet, or walk already,
Not to speak of trying to climb.
I will be wise another time,
And not desire a wall between us,
When next I see a church-roof cover
So many species of one genus,
All with foreheads bearing *Lover*
Written above the earnest eyes of them ;
All with breasts that beat for beauty,
Whether sublimed, to the surprise of
them,
In noble daring, stedfast duty,
The heroic in passion, or in action,—
Or, lowered for the senses' satisfaction,
To the mere outside of human creatures,
Mere perfect form and faultless features.
What! with all Rome here, whence to
levy
Such contributions to their appetite,

With women and men in a gorgeous bevy,
They take, as it were, a padlock, and clap
 it tight
On their southern eyes, restrained from
 feeding
On the glories of their ancient reading,
On the beauties of their modern singing,
On the wonders of the builder's bringing,
On the majesties of Art around them,—
And, all these loves, late struggling incessant,
When faith has at last united and bound
 them,
They offer up to God for a present !
Why, I will, on the whole, be rather
 proud of it,—
And, only taking the act in reference
To the other recipients who might have
 allowed of it,
I will rejoice that God had the preference !

XII.

So I summed up my new resolves :
Too much love there can never be.
And where the intellect devolves
Its function on love exclusively,
I, as one who possesses both,
Will accept the provision, nothing loth,
—Will feast my love, then depart elsewhere,

That my intellect may find its share.
And ponder, O soul, the while thou departest,
And see thou applaud the great heart of
the artist,
Who, examining the capabilities
Of the block of marble he has to fashion
Into a type of thought or passion,—
Not always, using obvious facilities,
Shapes it, as any artist can,
Into a perfect symmetrical man,
Complete from head to foot of the life-size,
Such as old Adam stood in his wife's
eyes,—
But, now and then, bravely aspires to
consummate
A Colossus by no means so easy to come
at,
And uses the whole of his block for the
bust,
Leaving the minds of the public to finish
it,
Since cut it ruefully short he must :
On the face alone he expends his devotion ;
He rather would mar than resolve to
diminish it,
—Saying, “ Applaud me for this grand
notion
“ Of what a face may be ! As for com-
pleting it

“In breast and body and limbs, do *that*,
you !”

All hail ! I fancy how, happily meeting it,
A trunk and legs would perfect the statue,
Could man carve so as to answer volition.
And how much nobler than petty cavils,
A hope to find, in my spirit-travels,
Some artist of another ambition,
Who having a block to carve, no bigger,
Has spent his power on the opposite
quest,

And believed to begin at the feet was
best—

For so may I see, ere I die, the whole
figure !

XIII.

No sooner said than out in the night !
And still as we swept through storm and
night,

My heart beat lighter and more light :
And lo, as before, I was walking swift,
With my senses settling fast and steady-
ing,

But my body caught up in the whirl and
drift

Of the Vesture's amplitude, still eddying
On just before me, still to be followed,
As it carried me after with its motion,

—What shall I say?—as a path were
 hollowed,
And a man went weltering through the
 ocean,
Sucked along in the flying wake
Of the luminous water-snake,

XIV.

Alone! I am left alone once more—
(Save for the Garment's extreme fold
Abandoned still to bless my hold)
Alone, beside the entrance-door
Of a sort of temple,—perhaps a college,
—Like nothing I ever saw before
At home in England, to my knowledge.
The tall, old, quaint, irregular town!
It may be . . . though *which*, I can't affirm
 . . . any
Of the famous middle-age towns of Ger-
 many;
And this flight of stairs where I sit down,
Is it Halle, Weimar, Cassel, or Frankfort,
Or Göttingen, that I have to thank for't?
It may be Göttingen,—most likely.
Through the open door I catch obliquely
Glimpses of a lecture-hall;
And not a bad assembly neither—
Ranged decent and symmetrical
On benches, waiting what's to see there;

Which, holding still by the Vesture's hem,
I also resolve to see with them,
Cautious this time how I suffer to slip
The chance of joining in fellowship
With any that call themselves His friends,
As these folks do, I have a notion.
But hist—a buzzing and emotion!
All settle themselves, the while ascends
By the creaking rail to the lecture-desk,
Step by step, deliberate
Because of his cranium's over-freight,
Three parts sublime to one grotesque,
If I have proved an accurate guesser,
The hawk-nosed, high-cheek-boned Professor.

I felt at once as if there ran
A shoot of love from my heart to the man—
That sallow, virgin-minded, studious
Martyr to mild enthusiasm,
As he uttered a kind of cough-preludious
That woke my sympathetic spasm,
(Beside some spitting that made me sorry)
And stood, surveying his auditory
With a wan pure look, well nigh celestial,—
—Those blue eyes had survived so much!
While, under the foot they could not
smutch,
Lay all the fleshly and the bestial.
Over he bowed, and arranged his notes,
Till the auditory's clearing of throats

Was done with, died into a silence ;
And, when each glass was upward sent,
Each bearded mouth composed intent,
And a pin might be heard drop half a mile
hence,—
He pushed back higher his spectacles,
Let the eyes stream out like lamps from
cells,
And giving his head of hair—a hake
Of undressed tow, for color and quantity—
One rapid and impatient shake,
(As our own young England adjusts a
jaunty tie
When about to impart, on mature
digestion,
Some thrilling view of the surplice-
question)
—The Professor's grave voice, sweet
though hoarse,
Broke into his Christmas-Eve's discourse.

XV.

And he began it by observing
How reason dictated that men
Should rectify the natural swerving,
By a reversion, now and then,
To the well-heads of knowledge, few
And far away, whence rolling grew
The life-stream wide whereat we drink,

Commingled, as we needs must think,
With waters alien to the source :
To do which, aimed this Eve's discourse.
Since, where could be a fitter time
For tracing backward to its prime,
This Christianity, this lake,
This reservoir, whereat we slake,
From one or other bank, our thirst ?
So he proposed inquiring first
Into the various sources whence
This Myth of Christ is derivable ;
Demanding from the evidence,
(Since plainly no such life was liveable)
How these phenomena should class ?
Whether 'twere best opine Christ was,
Or never was at all, or whether
He was and was not, both together—
It matters little for the name,
So the Idea be left the same :
Only, for practical purpose' sake,
'Twas obviously as well to take
The popular story,—understanding
How the ineptitude of the time,
And the penman's prejudice, expanding
Fact into fable fit for the clime,
Had, by slow and sure degrees, trans-
lated it
Into this myth, this Individuum, —
Which, when reason had strained and
abated it

Of foreign matter, gave, for residuum,
A Man!—a right true man, however!
Whose work was worthy a man's
endeavour!

Work, that gave warrant almost sufficient
To his disciples, for rather believing
He was just omnipotent and omniscient,
And it gives to us, for as frankly receiving
His word, their tradition,—which, though
it meant

Something entirely different
From all that those who only heard it,
In their simplicity thought and averred it,
Had yet a meaning quite as respectable:
For, among other doctrines delectable,
Was he not surely the first to insist on,
The natural sovereignty of our race?—
Here the lecturer came to a pausing-
place.

And while his cough, like a drouthy
piston,
Tried to dislodge the husk that grew to
him,
I seized the occasion of bidding adieu to
him,
The Vesture still within my hand.

XVI.

I could interpret its command.
This time He would not bid me enter
The exhausted air-bell of the Critic.
Truth's atmosphere may grow mephitic
When Papist struggles with Dissenter,
Impregnating its pristine clarity,
—One, by his daily fare's vulgarity,
Its gust of broken meat and garlic ;
—One, by his soul's too-much presuming,
To turn the frankincense's fuming
And vapours of the candle starlike
Into the cloud her wings she buoys on :
And each, that sets the pure air seething,
Poisoning it for healthy breathing—
But the Critic leaves no air to poison ;
Pumps out by a ruthless ingenuity
Atom by atom, and leaves you—vacuity.
Thus much of Christ, does he reject ?
And what retain ? His intellect ?
What is it I must reverence duly ?
Poor intellect for worship, truly,
Which tells me simply what was told
(If mere morality, bereft
Of the God in Christ, be all that's left)
Elsewhere by voices manifold ;
With this advantage, that the stater
Made nowise the important stumble
Of adding, he, the sage and humble,

Was also one with the Creator.
You urge Christ's followers' simplicity :
But how does shifting blame, evade it?
Have wisdom's words no more felicity ?
The stumbling-block, His speech—who
laid it ?

How comes it that for one found able,
To sift the truth of it from fable,
Millions believe it to the letter ?
Christ's goodness, then—does that fare
better ?

Strange goodness, which upon the score
Of being goodness, the mere due
Of man to fellow-man, much more
To God,—should take another view
Of its possessor's privilege,
And bid him rule his race ! You pledge
Your fealty to such rule ? What, all—
From Heavenly John and Attic Paul,
And that brave weather-battered Peter
Whose stout faith only stood completer
For buffets, sinning to be pardoned,
As the more his hands hauled nets, they
hardened,—

All, down to you, the man of men,
Professing here at Göttingen,
Compose Christ's flock ! So, you and I
Are sheep of a good man ! and why ?
The goodness,—how did he acquire it ?
Was it self-gained, did God inspire it ?

Choose which ; then tell me, on what
ground

Should its possessor dare propound
His claim to rise o'er us an inch ?

Were goodness all some man's invention,
Who arbitrarily made mention

What we should follow, and where
flinch,—

What qualities might take the style
Of right and wrong,—and had such
guessing

Met with as general acquiescing
As graced the Alphabet erewhile,
When A got leave an Ox to be,
No Camel (quoth the Jews) like G,—
For thus inventing thing and title
Worship were that man's fit requital.

But if the common conscience must
Be ultimately judge, adjust

Its apt name to each quality

Already known,—I would decree

Worship for such mere demonstration

And simple work of nomenclature,

Only the day I praised, not Nature,

But Harvey, for the circulation.

I would praise such a Christ, with pride

And joy, that he, as none beside,

Had taught us how to keep the mind

God gave him, as God gave his kind,

Freer than they from fleshly taint !

I would call such a Christ our Saint,
As I declare our Poet, him
Whose insight makes all others dim :
A thousand poets pried at life,
And only one amid the strife
Rose to be Shakespeare ! Each shall take
His crown, I'd say, for the world's sake—
Though some objected—" Had we seen
" The heart and head of each, what screen
" Was broken there to give them light,
" While in ourselves it shuts the sight,
" We should no more admire, perchance,
" That these found truth out at a glance,
" Than marvel how the bat discerns
" Some pitch-dark cavern's fifty turns,
" Led by a finer tact, a gift
" He boasts, which other birds must shift
" Without, and grope as best they can."
No, freely I would praise the man,—
Nor one whit more, if he contended
That gift of his, from God, descended.
Ah, friend, what gift of man's does not ?
No nearer Something, by a jot,
Rise an infinity of Nothings
Than one : take Euclid for your teacher :
Distinguish kinds : do crownings, clothings,
Make that Creator which was creature ?
Multiply gifts upon his head,
And what, when all's done, shall be said
But . . . the more gifted he, I ween !

That one's made Christ, another, Pilate,
And This might be all That has been,—
So what is there to frown or smile at?
What is left for us, save, in growth,
Of soul, to rise up, far past both,
From the gift looking to the Giver,
And from the cistern to the River,
And from the finite to Infinity,
And from man's dust to God's divinity?

XVII.

Take all in a word: the Truth in God's
 breast
Lies trace for trace upon ours impressed:
Though He is so bright and we so dim,
We are made in His image to witness
 Him;
And were no eye in us to tell,
Instructed by no inner sense,
The light of Heaven from the dark of Hell,
That light would want its evidence,—
Though Justice, Good and Truth were still
Divine, if, by some demon's will,
Hatred and wrong had been proclaimed
Law through the worlds, and Right mis-
 named.
No mere exposition of morality
Made or in part or in totality,
Should win you to give it worship, there-
 fore:

And, if no better proof you will care for,
—Whom do you count the worst man
upon earth?

Be sure, he knows, in his conscience,
more

Of what Right is, than arrives at birth
In the best man's acts that we bow before:
This last *knows* better—true; but my fact
is,

'Tis one thing to know, and another to
practise;

And thence I conclude that the real God-
function

Is to furnish a motive and injunction
For practising what we know already.
And such an injunction and such a motive
As the God in Christ, do you waive, and
“heady

High minded,” hang your tablet-votive
Outside the fane on a finger-post?

Morality to the uttermost,
Supreme in Christ as we all confess,
Why need *we* prove would avail no jot
To make Him God, if God He were not?
What is the point where Himself lays
stress?

Does the precept run “Believe in Good,
“In Justice, Truth, now understood
“For the first time?”—or, “Believe in
ME,

“ Who lived and died, yet essentially
“ Am Lord of Life ? ” Whoever can take
The same to his heart and for mere love’s
sake

Conceive of the love,—that man obtains
A new truth ; no conviction gains
Of an old one only, made intense
By a fresh appeal to his faded sense.

XVIII.

Can it be that He stays inside ?
Is the Vesture left me to commune with ?
Could my soul find aught to sing in tune
with

Even at this lecture, if she tried ?
Oh, let me at lowest sympathise
With the lurking drop of blood that lies
In the desiccated brain’s white roots
Without a throb for Christ’s attributes,
As the Lecturer makes his special boast !
If love’s dead there, it has left a ghost.
Admire we, how from heart to brain
(Though to say so strike the doctors dumb)
One instinct rises and falls again,
Restoring the equilibrium.
And how when the Critic had done his
best,
And the Pearl of Price, at reason’s test,
Lay dust and ashes levigable

On the Professor's lecture-table ;
When we looked for the inference and
monition

That our faith, reduced to such a condition,

Be swept forthwith to its natural dust-hole,—

He bids us, when we least expect it,
Take back our faith,—if it be not just
whole,

Yet a pearl indeed, as his tests affect it,
Which fact pays the damage done reward-
ingly,

So, prize we our dust and ashes accord-
ingly!

“Go home and venerate the Myth

“I thus have experimented with—

“This Man, continue to adore him

“Rather than all who went before him,

“And all who ever followed after!”—

Surely for this I may praise you, my
brother!

Will you take the praise in tears or
laughter?

That's one point gained; can I compass
another?

Unlearned love was safe from spurning—
Can't we respect your loveless learning?

Let us at least give Learning honor!

What laurels had we showered upon her,

Girding her loins up to perturb
Our theory of the Middle Verb ;
Or Turklike brandishing a scimeter
O'er anapæsts in comic-trimeter ;
Or curing the halt and maimed Iketides,
While we lounged on at our indebted ease :
Instead of which, a tricky demon
Sets her at Titus or Philemon !
When Ignorance wags his ears of leather
And hates God's word, 'tis altogether ;
Nor leaves he his congenial thistles
To go and browse on Paul's Epistles.
—And you, the audience, who might
 ravage
The world wide, enviably savage
Nor heed the cry of the retriever,
More than Herr Heine (before his fever),—
I do not tell a lie so arrant
As say my passion's wings are furled up,
And, without the plainest Heavenly
 warrant,
I were ready and glad to give this world
 up—
But still, when you rub the brow me-
 tulous,
And ponder the profit of turning holy
If not for God's, for your own sake solely,
—God forbid I should find you ridiculous !
Deduce from this lecture all that eases
 you,

Nay, call yourselves, if the calling pleases
you,

“Christians,”—abhor the Deist’s prav-
ity,—

Go on, you shall no more move my gravity,
Than, when I see boys ride a-cockhorse
I find it in my heart to embarrass them
By hinting that their stick’s a mock horse,
And they really carry what they say carries
them.

XIX.

So sate I talking with my mind.
I did not long to leave the door
And find a new church, as before,
But rather was quiet and inclined
To prolong and enjoy the gentle resting
From further tracking and trying and
testing.

This tolerance is a genial mood !
(Said I, and a little pause ensued).
One trims the bark ’twixt shoal and shelf,
And sees, each side, the good effects of it,
A value for religion’s self,
A carelessness about the sects of it.
Let me enjoy my own conviction,
Not watch my neighbour’s faith with
fretfulness,
Still spying there some dereliction
Of truth, perversity, forgetfulness !

Better a mild indifferentism,
To teach that all our faiths (though duller
His shines through a dull spirit's prism)
Originally had one color—
Sending me on a pilgrimage
Through ancient and through modern
times
To many people, various climes,
Where I may see Saint, Savage, Sage
Fuse their respective creeds in one
Before the general Father's throne !

XX.

. . 'Twas the horrible storm began afresh !
The black night caught me in his mesh
Whirled me up, and flung me prone.
I was left on the college-step alone.
I looked, and far there, ever fleeting
Far, far away, the receding gesture,
And looming of the lessening Vesture,
Swept forward from my stupid hand,
While I watched my foolish heart expand
In the lazy glow of benevolence,
O'er the various modes of man's belief.
I sprang up with fear's vehemence.
—Needs must there be one way, our chief
Best way of worship : let me strive
To find it, and when found, contrive
My fellows also take their share.
This constitutes my earthly care :

God's is above it and distinct !
For I, a man, with men am linked,
And not a brute with brutes ; no gain
That I experience, must remain
Unshared : but should my best endeavour
To share it, fail—subsisteth ever
God's care above, and I exult
That God, by God's own ways occult,
May—doth, I will believe—bring back
All wanderers to a single track !
Meantime, I can but testify
God's care for me—no more, can I—
It is but for myself I *know*.

The world rolls witnessing around me
Only to leave me as it found me ;
Men cry there, but my ear is slow.
Their races flourish or decay
—What boots it, while yon lucid way
Loaded with stars, divides the vault ?
How soon my soul repairs its fault
When, sharpening senses' hebetude,
She turns on my own life ! So viewed,
No mere mote's-breadth but teems im-
mense

With witnessings of providence :
And woe to me if when I look
Upon that record, the sole book
Unsealed to me, I take no heed
Of any warning that I read !
Have I been sure, this Christmas-Eve,

God's own hand did the rainbow weave,
Whereby the truth from heaven slid
Into my soul?—I cannot bid
The world admit He stooped to heal
My soul, as if in a thunder-peal
Where one heard noise, and one saw flame,
I only knew He named my name.
And what is the world to me for sorrow
Or joy in its censures, when to-morrow
It drops the remark, with just-turned head
Then, on again—That man is dead?
Yes,—but for me—my name called,—
drawn
As a conscript's lot from the lap's black
yawn,
He has dipt into on a battle-dawn:
Bid out of life by a nod, a glance,—
Stumbling, mute-mazed, at nature's
chance—
With a rapid finger circled round,
Fixed to the first poor inch of ground,
To fight from, where his foot was found;
Whose ear but a minute since lay free
To the wide camp's buzz and gossipry—
Summoned, a solitary man,
To end his life where his life began,
From the safe glad rear, to the dreadful
van!
Soul of mine, hadst thou caught and held
By the hem of the Vesture . . .

XXI.

And I caught
At the flying Robe, and unrepelled
Was lapped again in its folds full-fraught
With warmth and wonder and delight,
God's mercy being infinite.
And scarce had the words escaped my
tongue,
When, at a passionate bound, I sprung
Out of the wandering world of rain,
Into the little chapel again.

XXII.

How else was I found there, bolt upright
On my bench, as if I had never left it ?
—Never flung out on the common at night
Nor met the storm and wedge-like cleft it,
Seen the raree-show of Peter's successor,
Or the laboratory of the Professor !
For the Vision, *that* was true, I wist,
True as that heaven and earth exist.
There sate my friend, the yellow and tall,
With his neck and its wen in the selfsame
place ;
Yet my nearest neighbour's cheek showed
gall,
She had slid away a contemptuous space :
And the old fat woman, late so placable,

Eyed me with symptoms, hardly mis-
takeable,
Of her milk of kindness turning rancid :
In short a spectator might have fancied
That I had nodded betrayed by a slumber,
Yet kept my seat, a warning ghastly,
Through the heads of the sermon, nine in
number,
To wake up now at the tenth and lastly.
But again, could such a disgrace have
happened ?
Each friend at my elbow had surely
nudged it ;
And, as for the sermon, where did my
nap end ?
Unless I heard it, could I have judged it ?
Could I report as I do at the close,
First, the preacher speaks through his
nose :
Second, his gesture is too emphatic :
Thirdly, to waive what's pedagogic,
The subject-matter itself lacks logic :
Fourthly, the English is ungrammatic.
Great news! the Preacher is found no
Pascal,
Whom, if I pleased, I might to the task
call
Of making square to a finite eye
The circle of infinity,
And find so all-but-just-succeeding !

Great news ! the sermon proves no reading

Where bee-like in the flowers I may bury me,

Like Taylor's, the immortal Jeremy !

And now that I know the very worst of him,

What was it I thought to obtain at first of him ?

Ha ! Is God mocked, as He asks ?

Shall I take on me to change His tasks,

And dare, despatched to a river-head

For a simple draught of the element,

Neglect the thing for which He sent,

And return with another thing instead ?—

Saying . . “ Because the water found

“ Welling up from underground,

“ Is mingled with the taints of earth,

“ While Thou, I know, dost laugh at dearth,

“ And couldest, at a word, convulse

“ The world with the leap of its river-pulse,—

“ Therefore I turned from the ooziings muddy,

“ And bring thee a chalice I found, instead :

“ See the brave veins in the breccia ruddy !

“ One would suppose that the marble bled.

“ What matters the water ? A hope I have nursed,

“That the waterless cup will quench my thirst.”

—Better have knelt at the poorest stream
That trickles in pain from the straitest rift!
For the less or the more is all God’s gift,
Who blocks up or breaks wide the granite-seam.

And here, is there water or not, to drink?
I, then, in ignorance and weakness,
Taking God’s help, have attained to think
My heart does best to receive in meekness

This mode of worship, as most to His mind,

Where earthly aids being cast behind,
His All in All appears serene,
With the thinnest human veil between,
Letting the mystic Lamps, the Seven,
The many motions of His spirit,
Pass, as they list, to earth from Heaven.
For the preacher’s merit or demerit,
It were to be wished the flaws were fewer
In the earthen vessel, holding treasure,
Which lies as safe in a golden ewer;
But the main thing is, does it hold good measure?

Heaven soon sets right all other matters!—
Ask, else, these ruins of humanity,
This flesh worn out to rags and tatters,
This soul at struggle with insanity,

Who thence take comfort, can I doubt,
Which an empire gained, were a loss
without.

May it be mine ! And let us hope
That no worse blessing befall the Pope,
Turn'd sick at last of the day's buffoonery,
Of his posturings and his petticoatings,
Beside the Bourbon bully's gloatings
In the bloody orgies of drunk poltroonery !
Nor may the Professor forego its peace
At Göttingen, presently, when, in the dusk
Of this life, if his cough, as I fear, should
increase,

Prophesied of by that horrible husk ;
And when, thicker and thicker, the dark-
ness fills

The world through his misty spectacles,
And he gropes for something more sub-
stantial

Than a fable, myth, or personification,
May Christ do for him, what no mere man
shall,

And stand confessed as the God of salva-
tion !

Meantime, in the still recurring fear
Lest myself, at unawares, be found,
While attacking the choice of my neigh-
bour's round,

Without my own made—I choose here !
The giving out of the hymn reclaims me ;

I have done !—And if any blames me,
Thinking that merely to touch in brevity
The topics I dwell on, were unlawful,—
Or, worse, that I trench, with undue levity,
On the bounds of the Holy and the awful,
I praise the heart, and pity the head of him,
And refer myself to THEE, instead of
him ;

Who head and heart alike discernest,
Looking below light speech we utter,
When the frothy spume and frequent
sputter

Prove that the soul's depths boil in
earnest !

May the truth shine out, stand ever before
us !

I put up pencil and join chorus
To Hepzibah Tune, without further
apology,

The last five verses of the third section
Of the seventeenth hymn in Whitfield's
Collection,

To conclude with the doxology.



3 1210 00309 3810

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY



AA 000 602 928 4

2-4

PR 4222

C47

1305

